

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5632

S E C R E T AMMAN 6166

NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, US, JO, XF

SUBJECT: MESSAGE FROM PRIME MINISTER FOR SECRETARY

REF: A. STATE 217221 B. AMMAN 6164

1. PRIME MINISTER HAS JUST SENT ME (13:15 SEPTEMBER 13 LOCAL) MESSAGE RESPONDING TO ORAL MESSAGE CONTAINED REFTEL A WHICH I DELIVERED TO HIM THIS MORNING. MESSAGE MARKED "CONFIDENTIAL".

2. BEGIN TEXT:

EXCELLENCY,

FOLLOWING IS A MESSAGE FROM ME TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE. PLEASE BE SO KIND AS TO TRANSMIT IT TO HIM.

"DEAR MR. SECRETARY,

ON THE TENTH OF SEPTEMBER 1975, AMBASSADOR PICKERING DELIVERED TO HIS MAJESTY A MESSAGE FROM YOU WHICH CONTAINED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE FOLLOWING REQUEST "IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT I HOPE YOUR MAJESTY WILL BE ABLE TO INDICATE PUBLICLY A
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MORE POSITIVE JORDANIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE RECENT

AGREEMENT, AND THAT YOU WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO CONVINCE YOUR SYRIAN NEIGHBORS TO BE LESS CRITICAL OF EGYPT AND MORE POSITIVE ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF SOMETHING MORE FOR THEMSELVES, EVEN IF IT IS LIMITED IN SCOPE."

HIS MAJESTY AND I EXPLAINED TO AMBASSADOR PICKERING, AS WE DID TO YOU WHEN YOU WERE IN AMMAN, THAT WE HAVE ALWAYS SUPPORTED THE STEP BY STEP APPROACH TO THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM; THAT WE HAVE ALWAYS SUPPORTED A CONTINUATION OF THE U.S. INITIATIVES AND ROLE IN THE AREA AND THAT WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL SHORTLY RESUME YOUR EFFORTS TOWARDS ACHIEVING FURTHER INTERIM AGREEMENTS. WE ALSO INDICATED OUR FULL SUPPORT FOR THE SINAI AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE. BUT WE DO HAVE SERIOUS RESERVATIONS, DOUBTS AND FEARS ABOUT ITS CONTENTS. WE EXPLAINED TO YOU THAT THIS IN NO WAY REFLECTS ON YOUR ROLE SINCE THE AGREEMENT IS AN EGYPTIAN - ISRAELI AGREEMENT AND NOT AN AMERICAN ONE - AS YOU TOLD PRESIDENT ASSAD.

BUT INSPITE OF OUR RESERVATIONS, WE WERE WILLING TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE IN RESPONDING TO YOUR REQUEST. WE WERE WILLING TO ISSUE AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT SUPPORTING THE AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE, AND THE U.S. ROLE IN THE AREA, AND THE POLICY OF STEP BY STEP. BUT WE WOULD HAVE HAD TO ALSO EXPRESS OUR RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE CONTENTS OF THE AGREEMENT, NOT BECAUSE WE ARE INTERESTED IN CRITICIZING EGYPT - WHICH WE ARE NOT - BUT IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO REMAIN IN A POSITION THAT WILL HELP US MEET YOUR SECOND REQUEST IN YOUR MESSAGE, NAMELY TO INFLUENCE THE SYRIANS TO BE MORE POSITIVE AND LESS CRITICAL OF EGYPT. WE CERTAINLY COULD NOT DO THIS IF WE PUBLICLY TOOK EGYPT'S SIDE, EVEN IF WE APPROVED IN THE AGREEMENT'S CONTENTS - WHICH WE DO NOT.

THIS MORNING I WAS EXTREMELY SURPRISED TO
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HEAR YOUR REPLY TO OUR PROPOSED WAY OF RESPONDING FAVOURABLY TO YOUR REQUEST. YOU SAID "WE DO NOT NEED A STATEMENT FROM THE JORDANIANS CONCERNING THE SINAI AGREEMENT. WE SHALL CONDUCT OUR POLICY BY CONSULTING OUR BEST JUDGEMENT. WHEN JORDAN WANTS TO DISCUSS ITS OWN NEGOTIATIONS WE ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS IT."

NEEDLESS TO SAY, I CAN ANSWER THIS SHORT
MESSAGE OF YOURS IN GREAT DETAIL, BUT I WILL LIMIT
MYSELF TO THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS:-

1. I WISH TO REMIND YOU THAT THE "JORDANIANS"
DID NOT COME TO YOU OFFERING TO ISSUE YOU
A STATEMENT CONCERNING THE SINAI AGREEMENT.
YOU REQUESTED IT. AND IF YOU DO NOT NEED
IT, WE ARE HAPPY TO KNOW THAT, SINCE WE
WERE NOT INTERESTED IN GIVING IT IN THE FIRST
PLACE.

2. I AM CONFIDENT THAT YOU WILL CONDUCT YOUR
POLICY BY CONSULTING YOUR BEST JUDGEMENT.
I SINCERELY HOPE THAT THE RESULTS OF YOUR
POLICY IN THE AREA WILL PROVE THAT YOU HAVE
EXCELLENT JUDGEMENT.

3. JORDAN WAS READY - AS YOU MAY RECALL -
TO DISCUSS ITS OWN NEGOTIATIONS SOMETIME
AGO. YOUR BEST JUDGEMENT AT THE TIME
DID NOT MAKE THAT POSSIBLE. SO IT SEEMS
TO BE SOMEWHAT LATE TO SAY THAT WHEN
JORDAN WANTS TO DISCUSS ITS OWN NEGOTIAT-
IONS YOU ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THEM.

SINCERELY,

ADID AL-RIFAI
PRIME MINISTER "

ACCEPT, EXCELLENCY, THE ASSURANCES OF
MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

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SINCERELY,

ZAID AL-RIFAI
PRIME MINISTER

3. COMMENT: MESSAGE IS AS SHARP AS PREFIGURED REFTEL
(B). BELIEVE IT HAS BEEN CHECKED WITH KING, BUT HAVE
NOT CONFIRMED THAT POINT. FRANKLY SEE NO FURTHER VALUE
IN CONTINUING THIS EXCHANGE WHICH CAN ONLY LEAD TO
ADDITIONAL RECRIMINATIONS OVER THE ISSUE. KING'S
PRESENT EMOTIONAL STRESS AND THE CONSTANT SHIFTING OF
FACTORS ON THREE BASIC ISSUES -- HAWKS, SYRIA, AND
REACTION TO AGREEMENT -- ARE UNLIKELY TO PUT HIM IN
FRAME OF MIND WHERE ANYTHING CONSTRUCTIVE WOULD RESULT.

INDEED, IF QUESTION IS PURSUED FURTHER, HE IS LIKELY,
ON PAST FORM, TO MAKE EMOTIONAL DECISIONS WHICH
PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE IN BEST LONG TERM INTEREST OF
EITHER JORDAN OR US. END COMMENT.

4. ORIGINAL BEING POUCHED TO BREMER.
PICKERING

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